THE ORDER OF 

HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE 

AND 

SEVEN MEDITATIONS

FOREWORD

The Protestant denominations of the United States have a varied and rich tradition of communion liturgy. Churches of Hungarian Calvinist background often used the communion liturgies of the Reformed, Evangelical-Reformed, Presbyterian, Congregational and Episcopal Churches. Still, it was felt that the communion service of the Reformed Church in Hungary contains elements of theological dignity and adds an undefinable depth of beauty to the sacrament of Holy Communion. Many translations were in use by the bi-lingual ministers in the past. At the Ministerial Retreat of Calvin Synod the translations of the Right Reverend Dr. Stephen Szabo and the Reverend Arpad Beretz were selected for publication.

Holy Communion is observed seven times annually in the Hungarian Calvinist congregations in the United States: Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving for New Bread, Worldwide Communion and Thanksgiving for New Wine. For this reason seven communion meditations and prayers were added to the translations.

The Right Reverend Arpad George, president of Calvin Synod realized that the churches of Calvin Synod needed a unified liturgy based on a foundation that reflected their Calvinistic Reformed theological background. This publication of the Communion Worship Service is considered the first step in this effort. Ministers are urged to use this liturgical material and report their findings to the Committee on Liturgy.

Gifts from churches and organizations of Calvin Synod and the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America are hereby gratefully acknowledged. These contributions made this publication possible.

Calvin Synod,
The order for
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER
Translated by Dr. Stephen Szabo

1. INVOCATION / APOSTOLIC SALUTATION /
   Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our
   Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins that He
   might deliver us out of this present evil world, according
   to the will of our God and Father: to whom be the glory
   forever and ever. Amen. / Gal. 1: 3-5./

2. SHORT ADDRESS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
   HOLY COMMUNION.

3. PENITENTIAL PRAYER.
   Since there is no worthy partaking of the Lord’s Table
   without sincere confession and true repentance, let us
   humble ourselves before God and confess our sins pray-
   ing for the Grace of His forgiveness as follows:

   Lord God Eternal, Sovereign and most high! I, Thy
   unworthy, wretched, and miserable servant now humbly
   and openly do confess before Thee my many and diverse
   iniquities. I have offended against Thee, O Lord, and
   done evil in Thy sight with my wicked words and inten-
   tions, with my sight and hearing, with jealousy and
   rudeness, with my baneful, profane and wrathful nature.
   I confess unto Thee that I have sinned against Thee by
   disregarding Thy holy commandments, by being dis-
   obedient and hateful toward my neighbors, by ill using
   the sacred gifts of thy Grace by idly doing my
   Christian duties and obligations. With all these and
   many other secret and open sins, my Lord and my God, I
   have sinned against Thee and I have justly provoked Thy
   anger against me.

   Nevertheless Thou alone art a gracious and merciful
   God, who dost forgive the sins of all them that are
   penitent: therefore I humbly beseech Thee, forgive me,
   my God, all my iniquities. With the poured-out blood of
   Thy beloved Son wash me from the stains of my wicked-
   ness and sin: with the sinlessness of His sacrifice
   conceal the wretchedness of all my transgressions!
   Create in me new heart and soul O Lord! Thy Holy
   Spirit do not withhold from me, but rather make me par-
   take of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Sanctify me in my
   body and soul that I may be a worthy partaker at the
   table of Thy Holy Son and may receive all the benefits
   that he had wrought for me with the breaking of His body
   and the shedding of His blood: so that I may live a pure,
   holy and blameless life and after my death I may enter
   into life eternal, where Thou livest and reignest with
   Thy Holy Son and Thy Holy Spirit forever and ever.
   Amen. /Stephen Nyilas de Melota./

4. CONFESSION OF FAITH AND PLEDGE.
   After having confessed our sins, let us now profess
   our faith by repeating together the Apostles’ creed:

   APOSTLES’ CREED

   Dearly Beloved, though your faith I do not doubt, yet
   in accordance with the ancient tradition of our Church, I
   shall address a few questions to you, expecting each and
   every one of you to answer them openly and conscien-
   tiously:
1. Do you believe that because of the fall of the first man, originally created by God in righteousness, holiness and innocence, you yourselves are totally fallible and sinful, who by your own merits could not stand up before the judgment seat of God, but deserve punishment, death and damnation?

   If so, say: This I do believe and profess!

2. Do you believe that God, having compassion on sinful man, sent His Holy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the flesh for you, and through the once-for-all perfect sacrifice of Jesus He broke all the power of sin and damnation, and for the sake of His blood He makes you justified freely by His grace through faith?

   If so, say: This I do believe and profess!

3. Do you believe that God, who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, through Him will also raise us, and clothing our mortal bodies in immortality, will receive us into the eternal glory?

   If so, say: This I do believe and profess!

4. Believing all these and being grateful for all this grace, do you solemnly pledge and vow to consecrate your entire lives unto the Lord and so to live already on this earth as to show forth the glory of God by your good works, as it is becoming of His redeemed ones?

   If so, say: This I do pledge and vow!

5. PRONUNCIATION OF THE ABSOLUTION:

   Now I, an ordained minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, do declare and pronounce to you the absolution of your sins and the life eternal, that our Lord God does grant to all believers freely by His grace for the sake of His Holy Son, Amen.

6. CALL TO THE LORD'S TABLE:

   All of you now, who are heartily sorry for your sins and humbly put your trust in Christ are invited and encouraged in His name to come to this sacrament of the heavenly food and drink.

7. THE WORDS OF THE INSTITUTION AND CONSECRATION OF ELEMENTS:

   Let us now attend to the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are delivered unto us by the Apostle Paul in the 11th chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians as follows:

     "I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took the bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said: Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me ... After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.''

   Following the example of the Lord, let us likewise take the holy elements and for their consecration let us pray:

   Almighty God, since nothing can be sacred or blessed without being consecrated or blessed by Thee, we most humbly beseech Thee to grant that Thy Holy Spirit
descend upon this Thine own Ordinance. So sanctify
and bless these elements of bread and wine, these signs
and tokens of the body and the blood of Thy Holy Son,
that when we bodily partake of them, we may receive by
faith Christ crucified, and so feed upon Him, that He
may be one with us and we with Him: that He may live
in us and we in Him, both now and ever more. Amen.

/Here the minister distributes the elements, first
the bread, then the wine. The minister is the last
communicant./

8. CLOSING SENTENCES:
Dearly Beloved, thus had the Holy Supper been
instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus had the
Apostles, the Reformers, the heroic ancestors of our
faith preserved this sacrament for us through the ages.
Thus, in the same manner, we have partaken now of the
sacramental bread and wine. At the table of the Lord we
have been made again partakers of Christ and we have
again been reassured to be the very members of His
mystical body together with all those who have kept the
faith from generation to generation. Let us therefore
depart today from this holy table with determination to
hold fast upon all that we have here received.

But before we leave for our homes, let us rise and
praise the Lord's holy name in thanksgiving for His
grace and loving kindness, that he has shown to us again
in this sacrament of love.

9. PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:
Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me,
bless His holy name! Bless the Lord O my soul, and
forget not all his benefits! We bless Thee, our gracious
God, for Thou dost forgive all our iniquities, healest all
our diseases; Thou dost redeem our lives from destruc-
tion, and crownest us with loving-kindness and tender
mercies. Surely merciful and gracious art Thou, our God
and Father; slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kind-
ness: Thou wilt not always chide; neither wilt Thou
keep thy anger forever; Thou hast not dealt with us
according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our
iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth
and as far as the east is from the west, so great is Thy
loving-kindness and so far hast Thou removed our tran-
gressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children,
so Thou, O God, pitiest us, Thy children. Thanks and
praise be unto Thee, that of Thy boundless love Thou
has given Thy Holy Son as a sacrifice for our sins, and
as our heavenly food and drink unto everlasting life.
Thy loving-kindness is from everlasting to everlasting
upon them that fear Thee, and Thy righteousness unto
children's children, to such as keep Thy covenant. Bless
the Lord, all ye His angels, all ye His hosts, bless the
Lord, all ye His creatures! Bless the Lord! Bless the
Lord, O my soul! Amen.

/The paraphrase of Psalm 103 from the Agenda
of Stephen de Otves de Szatmar./

10. LORD'S PRAYER.
11. BLESSING:

And now, people of God, the blessing of the God the Father, God, the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, be amongst you, and remain with you always, so that you may be blessed in your homes and outside of your homes, in your bodies and in your souls, on this earth and in the life to come, both now and for evermore! Amen.

THE ORDER FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Translated by Reverend Arpad Beretz

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present age of wickedness, according to the will of God, our Father: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

THE INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY SUPPER

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, hear how our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the holy supper. This is presented to us by the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, Chapter Eleven, beginning at the Twenty-Third verse:

For I received from the Lord that which I also gave to you, That the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and after giving thanks, broke it and said: Take, eat: this is my body which is being broken for you. This do in remembrance of me. In the same manner also, he took the cup, after supper, and said: This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. For whenever you eat of this bread and drink of this cup, proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

CONFESSION OF SIN

And now in response to the bidding of our Lord, let
us proclaim and keep his memory by humbling ourselves before our God, acknowledging and confessing our sins and our unworthiness. Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, in Jesus Christ our heavenly Father, we come before Thee as poor sinners acknowledging and confessing that we are born in sin, prone to all evil and unapt to any good; Who, day by day, in manifold ways, transgress thy holy commandments; so that according to thy righteous judgment we deserve eternal death and damnation.

But now, O Lord, with broken hearts we lament and repent our many offenses against Thee; In true repentance we pass judgment upon ourselves and upon our sins; With humble hearts we cry out unto Thee: Help us in our affliction, O Lord! Have mercy upon us, O Father of Mercy! For the love of thy holy Son, forgive us our sins; Grant unto us and nurture within us, the gifts of thy Holy Spirit so that by their light we might recognize all the more our sins and by their power renounce and free ourselves of all sin; And thus to bring forth the good fruits of justification and sanctification as a sacrifice pleasing unto Thee through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The Holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

Dearly beloved, be well assured that I doubt not your confession of faith, nevertheless in conformity with the practice obtaining in the Church of our fathers, let me now address several questions to you, asking that each of you give reply according to your faith and conviction, conscientiously and audibly.

**MY FIRST QUESTION IS THIS:**

Do you believe that by the Fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve, whom God created in true righteousness, holiness and innocence, each of you also, are in all things, frail, fallible, and sinful, unable of your own strength to stand before the Judgment Seat of God, deserving instead punishment, death and damnation?

Answer, This I believe and confess.

Secondly, Do you believe that God having compassion on sinful man, released in the flesh, for your sake, his holy Son, the Lord Jesus, who by his one and perfect sacrifice took away the power of sin and damnation and that by free grace, for the merits of the blood of Jesus, will justify you by faith?

Answer, This I believe and confess.
Thirdly, Do you believe that God, who resurrected our Lord Jesus Christ will, by him, raise us also from the dead, and clothing our mortality with immortality, translate us into His eternal glory?
    Answer, This I believe and confess.

Surely, having believed all this, do you promise and resolve that in gratitude for this grace, you will dedicate your entire life to the Lord and even now, in this present world, live as his redeemed to the glory of God?
    Answer, This I promise and resolve.

All this, together with you, I, too, believe and confess, promise and resolve.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS PROCLAIMED

Now, therefore, as an unworthy, yet ordained servant of my Lord Jesus Christ, I proclaim unto you the forgiveness of your sins and the life everlasting which our Lord God will give to each of us, in freeness of grace and for the sake of his holy Son. Amen.

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

And now, those who befittingly prepared themselves, draw nigh to the Holy Table with humble hearts and in proper order.

THE COMMUNION

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

In the same manner in which Jesus gave thanks and broke and gave the bread, let us also, before partaking of the bread, give thanks. Let us pray.

It is with gratitude that we break and take from thy table, O Lord, this bread which symbolizes the broken body of Jesus and seals our sharing in the merits of his death. We know, O Lord, that nothing can be holy unless Thou dost make it holy therefore, Thou alone, bless and consecrate this bread.

Cleanse our hearts and sanctify our souls that we eat not of this bread unworthily and that we partake of it not only bodily but spiritually as well and become one with Christ; and that we be nourished by the heavenly bread unto eternal life. Amen.

THE POURING OF THE WINE

Let us also give thanks before partaking of the Cup. Let us pray.

It is with gratitude that we take from thy table, O Lord, this cup in which the wine recalls to us the outpoured blood of Jesus and is a token of the merits of his once and for all perfect sacrifice. We know, O Lord, that this cup which is a new covenant in the blood of Christ will be refreshing to our souls only if Thou wilt bless and consecrate it. We know, O Lord, that whoever drinks unworthily of this cup, sins against the blood of Christ and drinks damnation unto himself; Therefore, Thou alone, bless and consecrate this cup, and as we partake outwardly of the wine, let us by faith and in the spirit unite with Christ and become as one of his own. Amen.
A SHORT EXHORTATION

It was in this manner that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the last supper; thus did the Apostles, the Reformers, our professing Fathers partake of it, and thus did we partake of it also, by the grace of God.

But before dismissing you, we beg and admonish, let not the grace of God be lost in your lives. Let not sin rule over you anymore. But rather, in your conduct also, be worthy of your Christian calling, so that nothing might take from you that love of God which he manifested and confirmed in Jesus Christ. As his saints and loved ones be compassionate; put on goodness, humility, meekness and long-suffering. Bear with one another and if you have a complaint against one another, forgive each other even as Jesus forgave you. May the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were also called in one body.

And now, before returning to our homes, let us raise our hearts to God and thank Him for all His mercies. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

In the sacrament of the holy supper, Thou hast given to us a token of thy reconciling love in Jesus Christ. What can we give Thee for this Thy goodness? All the days of our life, we will proclaim the richness of thy mercy, by which thou hast adopted us as thy children and hast chosen us for thine inheritance. O God! thou hast redeemed us at a great price; And for this, the joy of our life will be to praise thee, and to dedicate both body and soul to thee. Accept, O Lord, our grateful thanks and help us by thy grace, to keep the vows made to unto thee on this holy occasion.

Let us be faithful unto Thee till death. Teach us to do thy will. Let us be born again by the Holy Spirit so that from this day forward, we may live by faith in Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us. O God of Peace, bless us in all perfection; keep our bodies and souls holy and blameless until the day in which Jesus, our Saviour, will come: to whom with Thee, our Father and with the Holy Spirit, our Comforter be eternal praise and glory. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.
COMMUNION MEDITATION FOR CHRISTMAS

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death..." I. Cor. 11; 26.

We have just proclaimed the exceedingly happy message of the Lord's birth, and here we are, called upon to proclaim the message of His death. It is a distinct tradition of our Hungarian Reformed Church to have the Table of the Lord set for the believers on every great Holy day of the year, including Christmas. How strange it is to set this Holy Table on this day, laid side by side with the manger of Bethlehem! Manger and Cross, these two, are the most expressive symbols of our holy religion. These two stand nearer to each other in the Christian faith and in our earthly life than most of us would ever realize. The manger of Bethlehem is the symbol of Peace, the Cross of Calvary is the symbol of Sacrifice. And we can never attain the fullness of Peace on this earth, unless we are prepared to face the issue of Sacrifice. Sacrificial life; is not that message of the Christian Gospel? Life based on sacrifice; is not that the true message of Christmas? "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son..." We come today, even as the shepherds of old, with awe. Awe that Almighty God could send His Son to such an earth as this, to be sacrificed at the end for such sinners as we are.

Once I viewed a dramatic presentation of the Nativity in a great Opera House. I will never forget it. Christmas music was sung by a great choir. Voices and organ music filled the tremendous hall in a mounting ecstasy of sound. Lights became lighter and lighter. When organ and choir had reached a sweeping crescendo, suddenly with a brilliant flash of light and crash of music two mammoth doors swung open, and there before our eyes was the manger scene, with a huge, black Cross in the background. The ear drums vibrated to the exultant "Joy to the world, the Lord is come." The choir, the organ, the lights and the sudden appearing of the manger scene produced upon the audience an overwhelming feeling of joy and peace: but the sight of the huge, black Cross behind the manger just as suddenly filled the hearts of the audience with the feeling of awe. Here before our eyes had been portrayed the miracle of God's sending His Son into this world. There was an irresistible attraction about the whole scene, and yet it was tremendously frightening! We were startled into a new appreciation of the dramatic event which changed the course of history so long ago. We were humbled and penitent before God's supreme act.

The message of the manger overshadowed by the cross is faith and sacrifice. When did the world need such a message more than in our day? Has there been a time in history when men needed a working faith more than now? When in history has faith in goodness and peace, in right and justice been more severely tested? When, if not now, has faith so sorely tried faith that love will ultimately triumph over hate, that justice will dethrone injustice, that right will conquer over might?

Faith in a dependable, Almighty God, whose will is joy to the world and peace among men: that is the
message of the manger. The peace of the Christchild, though, is a paradoxical truth: for His peace is within strife, His calm is in the midst of turmoil, His victory is in death. The message of the manger of Bethlehem is sacrifice. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Standing before the manger overshadowed by the cross in awe, humility and deep penitence, we cannot escape to receive at this Communion Table the true and real message of Christmas: for joy is born in sorrow, and life is born in death. So taught us the Savior, by whose manger we bow in reverence to-day and in whose cross we glory.

Come to the manger overshadowed by the cross, all of you who are sorrowful; there is a message of joy for you here!

Come to the manger overshadowed by the cross, all of you who have lost heart and whose faith lags; there is a message of faith for you here!

Come to the manger overshadowed by the cross, all of you who long for peace, for here you will receive peace that passeth all understanding!

Come to the manger overshadowed by the cross, all of you who desire the secret of life; here you will receive the message of sacrifice!

Union with Christ at this Christmas Communion Table becomes a real and shining fact. Unseen hands join us, millions of partakers, all the way around the whole wide world, with Him and with each other. It is a real communion of saints, it is the brotherhood of Christ's elects, which proclaims to us through the message of His birth and of His death our unity in Him and our faith in the Kingdom to come in spite of all the hatred of this world and all the raging of seemingly endless wars.

This communion of His saints alone is able to dissolve all the suspicions, envies, misunderstandings and hatreds of men's hearts and, thus removing the causes of any future bloodshed and wars, can alone bring about the reign of peace, love and justice: the Kingdom of God.

"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time:
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.
When the woes of life o'er take me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy:
Never shall the cross forsake me:
Lo, it glows with peace and joy.
Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the cross are sanctified:
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide."

PRAYER
O Christ, in whom we live, and move and have our being,
O holy child of Bethlehem! "Descend to us, we pray.
Cast out our sin and enter in; Be born in us today."
O Christ, thou hast taught us to pray for the coming of thy Father's Kingdom, in which his righteous will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. Help us in the courage of faith to build this Kingdom of Love in times when thy great hope has grown dim in so many human hearts. Help
us to proclaim the victory of thy manger overshadowed by thy cross. Help us to live by truth and love, in times when so many live by lies and hatred. Teach us the grace of sacrificial giving, the deeper and richer joy of sacrifice. When we think of Thee today as the One that was given to us by the Father, let us also remember that thou hast also made for us the greatest sacrifice. When we now proclaim thy peace, let us also remember that thy victory is in death. O Christ, thou didst die that we might truly live. Help us so to partake in the heavenly food and drink of thy broken body and outshed blood that we may live in thee and thou mayest live in us now and forevermore. Show us, thy erring children, at last the way of the City of Love and Peace. O Lord, once more we make thy faith our prayer: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven." Amen.

/Dr. Stephen Szabo/

LENTEN COMMUNION MEDITATION

"LET A MAN EXAMINE HIMSELF...!"

I. Cor. 11:28

This is the season of Lent... A time of meditation, prayer, fasting and spiritual discipline. We are compelled by the memories of the greatest events of Jesus’ life. When He turned his face toward Jerusalem he never wavered, never hesitated.

As we face the Lenten period, our routine, every day church life must come to a halt. We dare not, we must not impair the dynamic potential of the "means of grace." The vital currents of redemptive grace must not be blocked by our complacent attitudes. We dare not water down the sacred promises sealed in the Lord’s Supper.

The Corinthian Church was in trouble. The koinonia-eucharist, the fellowship of the holy supper became a boasting banquet of rich food for the well to do, and physical and spiritual starvation diet for the poor. Order had to be restored. THE CHURCH HAD TO GUARD HER INNERMOST MYSTERIES BY SPIRITUAL VIGOR. The apostle Paul gives the order of the Lord’s Supper in I Cor. 11:23-29. He sternly warned against the profaning of the holy elements of the Lord’s Supper in which the bread is food indeed for our spiritual hunger, the wine quenches our thirst, through the mystery of the blood of Jesus, the Christ.

We stand here at the Lord’s Table. All is prepared. God was able and is able to do what He has promised in his objective, redemptive, liberating grace. The author of the Gospel-Sacraments, according to the Second Helvetic
Confession, is God Himself. By His Son, Jesus, the Christ, He ordained this holy feast. The Cross of Jesus, "the one and only sacrifice enough once and for all" was sealed by victory in the resurrection of Jesus, the Christ, since God raised His Son from the dead. So God's sufficient, forgiving grace became so inviting, so challenging / we would almost say with our forefathers as "irresistible"/ that "the call", repentance, conversion, salvation, liberation, new birth, new life all this and heaven too is open to all believers who come and heed the invitation of the Host Himself and answer the call... SO DO COME.

And if we still have many "who are weak and ill", if we still stumble and fall victims to our own follies, we are responsible. DARE WE SAY IT? We must? We are blocking the powerful liberating forces of redemptive grace, promised and sealed in the Lord's Supper, by eating and drinking "unworthily".

"LET A MAN EXAMINE HIMSELF..." Let us test ourselves. Is our repentance sincere enough? Do we have enough self-knowledge to know and confess our real sins? Man, woman look into your own heart. Think of your job! Are you a real steward in your work and accept for it full responsibility before God? Think of your family. Are you a real husband, loving wife, responsible parent? Answer yes, or repent and amend your ways. At this moment you are in Church, which is a part of the Universal Christian Church, the people of God. This is the Church where we remember Jesus, the Christ. This is the Church, where we worship God in spirit and in truth. This is the Church where we love the brethren, and act out our faith-trust in the spirit of the Good Samaritan. This is the Church where we learn to pray, read and heed the Bible, and take the Lord's Supper. We are Church-people: men and women, young and old. DID WE DO WELL IN THE CHURCH? If not, and all of us fall far short of the glory of God, we all must repent, and amend our ways. LOOK DEEP ENOUGH, IF YOU CAN! Uncover the innermost parts of your soul. Let your conscience be bare and naked before the Throne of Grace. Nay, not enough! Dig, go deeper for the covered hidden recesses of the unconscious. Look, search for real sins, guilt, burdens, hurts caused by real sins, and foggy, phony sins of your own childhood fixations, compulsions that cry with bitter accusations. Do you really want to be forgiven? Do you really want to shed your self-defeating frozen defenses? Speak up and plead in sincere, humble prayer. If payment was necessary – as our ancestors, generations of the "sons of Adam" felt it was necessary –, the ransom was paid by the Great Son of God. If justification, new standing we need: the new status is given to us status-seekers, a real status by the grace of God. We must not seek any more scapegoats, not even in our own selves. Jesus, the Christ carried the cross, lifted the curse of Adam... If pioneer we need, He is the Pioneer... We do have a Mediator, a real High Priest who intercedes for us all even Jesus, the Christ our Lord. HE IS THE HOST OF THIS SACRED TABLE, YOU ARE INVITED, DO COME! Amen
Almighty and Eternal God. In faith and humble trust we stand before the Lord’s Table: we share with our brethren our good hope... As we pray, we do remember “the mystical union” way of Jesus the Christ with the brethren. We are tied to him by the bonds of gratitude and loyalty. We pray: may the elements of the Lord’s Supper serve as efficient means of grace, sealing the tokens of Thy redemption and forgiveness to our hearts. In penitence we repent of our willful sins, but, oh help us to uncover the repressed, buried sins that fester in and poison our innermost parts. We would confess them, oh God of redemption, we repent of them, may we make amends if possible... oh forgive us, that we may forgive ourselves and plead for Thy better forgiveness for our brethren. In good hope we hear the good news that we are acceptable. We shall continue faithful, made strong by Thy forgiving grace: free, redeemed... Look at us with mercy, oh God of grace, do remember Jesus the Christ of the Cross. Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN... Free translation, 6th verse of Hymn no. 346 in the American Hungarian Reformed Hymnal; transl. by Julius Paal.

Come heav’nly bread, pray, we would be truly fed. Nourish our souls now unto eternal life. We know whoever eats this holy food, Never starves though left lonely, uprooted. Fountain of life open now thy mystic way: The thirsty brethren this drink they would now take. Render unto them this cup loyal, free. Quench their thirst here and in eternity. /Julius Paal/

EASTER COMMUNION

The celebration of the passover is one of the oldest ritual of the people of Israel. It was held in memory of God’s deliverance of the people of Israel from the bondage they suffered in Egypt. It was instituted by God as an annual reminder of this covenant and great event.

Before his death, our Lord celebrated the passover festival with his disciples. Jesus selected the season of passover for the institution of the second sacrament. The Lord’s Supper was instituted by Christ as a seal of a new covenant. The first covenant was for the people of Israel only, but the New Testament or Second covenant is for every person irregardless of race or color. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” /John 3: 16./ Jesus took the two most common elements of a palestinian meal to institute the Lord’s Supper. Men throughout the centuries because of the limitations of language were never able to fully express all that the bread and wine and the cross means to a Christian.

At the institution of the Lord’s Supper Jesus had all his disciples together sharing the elements of the broken bread and wine. By this our Lord wanted to encourage all Christians of all generations and of all ages that they too should partake of the holy elements as members belonging to the large Christian family. It is the supreme symbol of Christian fellowship. By eating and drinking together the Christians declare that they are one family
in the church of Jesus Christ. All the disciples, including the one who would betray him and the other who would deny him were sitting and eating together as the Lord’s guests. Our Lord was unwilling to exclude anyone from the grace and spiritual benefits of the Holy Supper. The love of Jesus is unlimited in Holy Communion. In it there is a place for the strong and the weak; for the rich and the poor; for the old and the young; for the confessor, betrayer and denier alike. It is a pity that the sacrament instituted by our Lord to symbolize the oneness of the Christian faith and the unity of the Christians had become one of the greatest dividing factors of Christendom throughout the ages. The early Christians preserved the simplicity and the meaning of the Lord’s Supper. It was Ulrich Zwingli who restored the simplicity of the Lord’s Supper by distributing the elements of bread and wine on April 13, 1525 as symbols, signs and seals of sacramental grace. Thus he had challenged the doctrine of transubstantiation.

The Lord’s Supper was instituted in the shadow of the cross. As we gather around the Lord’s Table we should seriously and respectfully observe our Lord’s instruction: “THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.” The Lord’s Supper is a proclamation of his completed work on earth and the memorial of his death. The New Testament emphasizes that the sacrifice of Jesus was perfect, all-sufficient and made once and forever on the cross of Golgotha. The second sacrament reminds the Christians of their deliverance from sin by his death. It is the symbol of the most solemn and most sacred remembrance of his death. It is strange that during the Middle ages at the dawn of Reformation out of 433 churches and chapels in Rome 121 were dedicated to Mary and only 15 were dedicated to Jesus Christ himself.

Finally, the Lord’s Supper should be considered a sacrament which summarizes the great doctrines of the Christian faith in the simple elements of bread and wine. All Christians should emphasize as they gather around the Lord’s Table their belief in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in immortality and everlasting life. Our life on earth is but a step toward that heavenly life where a place is prepared for us in God’s kingdom or as Paul has so ably stated in his apostolic letter: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.” Amen.

PRAYER

Our heavenly Father we desire to receive the blessing that Thou hast promised and instituted for Thy children. Had it not been for the sins of mankind, Thy Son would not have had to suffer on the cross. We confess we are unworthy of the price paid for us. We have squandered our right to Thy love and we have broken Thy law foolishly and sinfully seeking to please ourselves. Make us aware of the cost of our sin and cause us to face Thy Son at Calvary. Open now our hearts that we may more fully comprehend the grace of the heavenly Father expressed in our Lord and Savior. Forgive us our sins and bring us into Thy presence for a renewal of Thy
cleansing. Send us forth from this table with clean hands and pure hearts. Help us to present our own bodies to Him in living sacrifice, acceptable to Him, and take our bodies and use them in the service of our Lord. Amen.

/ Arpad George /

PENTECOST COMMUNION MEDITATION
IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT UNITES


Man's age-old quest for God has been crowned with good success at times and disappointing failures at other times. The search for a relevant God /or gods/ ended in theological uncertainty at a time when there were no messengers or prophets. This uncertainty usually colored man's thinking to the extent that it drove him into irresponsibility and nonchalance often creating an alienation and estrangement within the self and a real tragedy for society. The religious conception always represented an important characteristic of each culture, therefore uncertainty in this basic ingredient of a culture led to tragic consequences. On the other hand, once a genuine religious experience had been acquired, and it became /"lost"/ again, we are anxious to know /"Why"/ and /"How"/ it became lost.

The basic assertion of every holiday is to uphold and perpetuate the central and singular event of God's love and self-revelation in Jesus Christ. The message of the first Pentecost centers upon the question of how to keep, how to continually make it relevant in our lives, all the experiences that God had granted us to have and to hold. The initial step of /"finding us"/ had been made by God; he had engendered the faith in our hearts, had made the reality of Himself approachable in Jesus Christ. The work of the Spirit is to seal and to keep this relationship alive through the mystery of all possible spiritual
communications: the church, the fellowship, the worship and — the communion. These are all Means of Grace as our Reformed Christian forefathers called them, meaning that these were channels for His Word and Will to come to us.

The divine call had already been pronounced for the disciples. They were considered to be as ‘His Own’, and while there was a deep seated yeaming for that happy relationship they enjoyed with the Master while He was with them, there was also a besetting, perhaps irrational, fear in their hearts. They needed the sanctifying power from on high that would fill that gap in their hearts which was left by his departure. They were huddled “together in one place” both for joy and fear. They were joyful because they were aware of their call and purpose; they were fearful because the Lord was with them no more.

Fear is the characteristic atmosphere of people without God and natural habitat of all agnostics, doubting-thomases and atheists /if there are, really, such men at all/. Modern psychiatric studies revealed the manifold detriments of a fearful life as demonstrated in the various ‘phobias’ and anxieties. Christians always knew that this devil can only be chased out by prayer, and it is faith “that casteth out fear” ... When confronted with fearful events our Lord turned them into challenges of faith, otherwise he would have been unable to continue his ministry. The horrible pain of the crucifix-execution instilled benumbing fear in the unfortunate sufferer and intimidated the onlookers. Without surmounting the communications: the church, the fellowship, the worship and — the communion. These are all Means of Grace as our Reformed Christian forefathers called them, meaning that these were channels for his Word and Will to come to us.

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purposeful consolidation and concord of His children. The future of the church cannot be secured by contemporary tricks, know-how, not even by the most pious planning, but by recapturing the first outpouring of the Spirit. The degree of our ecumenical progress is the true gauge of God's spirit in our hearts, and the same spirit is the sole guarantee of its continued success.

As we prepare ourselves for this kingly feast we must recall that the immediate effect of this Supper must be preserved for the days to come, otherwise it will not govern our thoughts, deeds and desires, and will not penetrate our whole life. Like a contract without the corroborating seal is invalid, so is this Communion if it lacks His Spirit. Eating and drinking is not for now, but for the days ahead when we shall see, as if in retrospect, whether we had really communed with Him or not. What is its use, if it is only a solitary experience and not a lasting taste of how good it is to live with the Lord, and in the Lord through Christ. Like the bread and wine become one with and inseparable from the body, permeates its cells, lends power, energy and life to it, so should God's recognized, realized, shared blessing become the very life for us through that communicating agent, which is the Holy Spirit. At the touch of the spirit the bread and wine become the very reality of Christ's presence in us by faith, and it will be the very same spirit which sanctifies this for us.

Like mortar and cement bind the bricks into one structure, the Spirit of God binds and bonds man-to-God and God-to-man and even binds man-to-man in such a way that Christ's own body, the Church of His Glory becomes visible again through the lives of His children. When the unholy faces the holy, when the sinner encounters the sacred, there are two things present for certain: the shared guilt and the mutual shame of our unworthiness. The vows we utter here, the promises we make, the pledges we plignt will all be in vain unless God's own spirit will seal them for us in the ongoing movement of His own body, the church of Jesus Christ, in which we move and have our being in union with Him and with All of His own.

Amen.
PRAYER

Thou everloving and most compassionate Lord our Father, who hast become our Savior in Jesus Christ, and our Sanctifier through the Holy Spirit, we invoke Thy pardon at this time as we humbly confess our manifold sins, shortcomings and miseries. Be not angry with us and hold not our offenses before thy countenance. We acknowledge that we have no excuses whatsoever and no defense of merit at all which would speak and testify for us. Humbly we confess that we are both obstinate and resolute for walking on the path that leads away from Thee, yet we also know that Thou art compassionate and forgiving Father who takes pity on us and lifts before us the crown of Redemption. We thank Thee for sending forth the Holy Spirit upon thy disciples and upon thy church continually ever since those fiery tongues descended upon them. Remember oh Lord thy Church Universal which is all over the world and remember the congregations of thy faithful ones whom thou hast called out of darkness into thy marvellous light. Uphold all those who minister to thy people in our or other lands, who proclaim the Gospel of thy Son and administer the sacraments. Let our penitence be without pretense, our confessions without hypocrisy and our devotion unreserved. Grant unto all thy faithful children to be daily renewed and more genuinely inspired by the splendid examples of thy servants of old whose prayers thou hast answered and thy church had been established to be a safe haven for the storm-tossed and the sin-ridden and who wish to amend their lives and rededicate themselves to thee. Vouchsafe us the habitation of thy spirit in our hearts that we may be equipped to do all things unto thy glory and honor and for the furtherance of thy Kingdom. Inflame in us the fire of love to behold lovely and sacred all things that have been set aside for thy service and grant us the continued light of thy inspiration. Cause these sacred elements to become the very body and blood of thine Only Begotten and feed us with holy mysteries, nurture us with thy spirit and sanctify us with the same. Then dismiss us with thy blessing and with the hope and faith in our hearts that thou will remain with us in the days to come. In Jesus's name we ask. Amen

/ Aaron Elek /
COMMUNION FOR NEW BREAD

'I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.
John 6:35:

Two of the seven yearly communion services directly connects our daily life with the deepest of our spiritual experiences in Jesus Christ: the Communion. These two communion services are connected with the elements of the Communion, the bread and the wine. It is fitting that the disciples of Jesus should not forget that even in the midst of a highly mechanized civilization our wide variety of life sustaining food stuffs, and among them the daily bread, is one of the greatest blessings He bestows on our lives. Just as we plead in the Lord’s prayer at each of our Services, and also in private prayers: "Give us this day our daily bread..." we bring our thanksgiving for the daily bread and all the material blessings to the yearly celebration of the Communion for New Bread.

It is necessary that we express our thanksgiving for all the material blessings we have received from the heavenly Father. These material blessings are symbolized by the most common of these, the daily bread. According to statistical reports most of us live in large metropolitan areas where we are so far removed from planting and harvest that we take the daily bread for granted. Occasionally we are reminded by newspaper articles that in India, China, or in some other parts of the world, people face starvation because of drought, floods, or other natural disasters, but in our affluent society we need to be brought into the presence of the Eternal. Thanksgiving for new bread reminds us that we owe much to our heavenly Father for all we have received. We are also surrounded by the swiftly advancing scientific civilization where—seemingly—"the difficult is solved immediately and the impossible takes a little longer." Being a part of this scientific civilization few of us are not affected by an immense pride in man’s achievement and self-sufficiency that relegates all that is connected with Christ to an obscure corner of spirituality. The almost daily occurence of scientific advancement is a heady diet and it is easy to forget the immense problems we created. Man, in spite of his achievements, remains a toy of inner forces. His cleverness and achievements are often used to annihilate his fellow human beings or use them to serve his own egotistic purposes. The vicious circle: greater achievement more encompassing problems will not cease unless we learn humility. Nothing will teach us humility clearer than the reminder that all things, even the simplest, the daily bread, comes from the hands of God. Thanksgiving communion for new bread brings you into the presence of the Creator and Master of the world, to show that to-day we are just as dependent on Him as ever before in history.

Communion for new bread intends to restore the right relationship between God and your material world. It also aims to light up the road of right relationship to
our fellow men. In a parable /Mt. 25:31-46/ Jesus mentions that the nations will be judged when the Son of man comes again in his glory. This judgment is by precepts that are closely connected with our daily life: "for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." And when the righteous will answer him, "Lord when did we see thee hungry and feed thee..." He will answer: "Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." In a world where nations and individuals will do most anything to amass a larger portion of the material wealth of this world, this communion reminds us, that we are his stewards. He surrounds us with the riches of His world and lets us manage it for his glory and the benefit of our fellow men.

We stand in the presence of God and our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ and humbly acknowledge our complete dependence on Him. A complete dependence that brings peace of mind and lights up the road of life until thanksgiving for new bread becomes a joyful acknowledgment: My Lord and Master, you are the bread of Life.

Amen

PRAYER

Our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, in the quiet of this Communion Service we pray that Thy Spirit may enter our hearts and reveal to us how near Thou art. Reassure us that we are precious in Thy sight.

We know that Thou hast provided for the necessities of Life. As we come to the Table of grace to partake of the broken bread, we remember that Thy concern continues. We cannot fully calculate the blessings that Thou hast provided for our material life. Warm our hearts with a deep appreciation of the length and depth and breadth of God’s love with which he has provided for all our needs.

We know that we have offended Thee by our conceit in our achievements, and by some of the things we have done. Make us humble because of our sins and shortcomings. May we have a more complete understanding of the tragic nature of our sins and the great price that was paid for our redemption.

We need forgiveness and we need thy redeeming power. We come to this table of grace and mercy in our need for there is no other place where we can find peace. Bless us through the forgiveness of our sins and use us as thy stewards in making Thy kingdom a reality in our world. Amen.

/Desmond D. Parragh/
COMMUNION MEDITATION

WORLD-WIDE COMMUNION SUNDAY

"... that they may all be one."
John 17:21

Our fellowship is in Jesus Christ. Only as we have fellowship in Him do we have fellowship with each other. If we are in Him we are members of His body and if members of His body, we have oneness and unity with Him and with each other. This is the witness of Christians everywhere as they gather around the Table of the Lord on this day.

For it is only as we gather around the Lord’s Table that we become the fellowship of believers. It is here that we are united and in the resurrection of our Lord. It is here that we ask and receive the forgiveness of sins. And it is here that the inner testimony of God’s Holy Spirit reveals to us our oneness in the Body of Christ.

As we partake of the bread and the wine that symbolizes the broken body and the out-poured blood of Jesus, we do so not as people disunited or separated from each other but as people who are one in faith and love and spirit. The barriers of space and time are overcome and we walk as one people. This world-wide communion of Christians is the seal and the pledge of that oneness. It is a witness to the world and to each other that we have a common inheritance and a common future in the Lord. And we covet for everyone the sweet taste of that oneness and unity and joy that is Christ.

But the visible Body of Christ, the Church, is not united or as yet one. It is with deep repentance and sorrow that we acknowledge and confess our divisions and our disunity. Too often pride of faith and heritage, of history and tradition, of theology and polity have blinded us and kept us from seeing our Lord and His people.

Even as we share in this Holy Communion not all Christians will be present. The Table is the Lord’s table. It is open to all who acknowledge and confess their sins and are truly sorry and repentant and who seek forgiveness and eternal life. Yet, some will say, we can not meet with you at the Lord’s Table because of tradition, background, color or race. And some because of theological and doctrinal teachings. But whatever it is, this is certain — it keeps us from partaking of the sacred feast together.

And yet, if the visible oneness of the Body of Christ, the Church, is ever to come about, it must take place at the Lord’s Table. Pride and prejudice, property and status, position and wealth must be laid aside. We must in faith look to Jesus Christ and accept and serve His kingdom. Then, and only then, will our oneness be made manifest before the world and ourselves. Then, and only then, will we be able to clasped each other by the hand in Christian hope and love. The symbol of our disunity must not be the Table of the Lord. We must pray unceasingly that our oneness in Christ might be made manifest in our oneness at His Table.

On this day we are witnesses and participants in an
COMMUNION FOR NEW WINE INTOXICATED CHRISTIANITY

"Do not get drunk with wine; for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit."
Eph. 5:15

According to the tradition of the Church of our fathers, we are together this morning to celebrate Holy Communion with particular emphasis on the New Wine.

Of course, this is an opportunity to give thanks to God, our Father for providing us not only food, but drink as well. Let us see clearly that according to the Scriptures drink in itself is not evil. Wine is God's gift to enjoy it with thankful heart /Ps. 104:14/. Our Lord was called a "glutton and drunkard" /Mt. 11:19/ because he used food and drink not according to scrupulous rules, but with a free and thankful heart. So did Paul, the apostle /I. Tim. 5:13/. The American-Puritan attitude of total abstinence and "prohibition" is not the traditional Christian attitude.

But having said this we have to realize that drink can become sin in drunkenness. While drink as such is not condemned either in the Old or in the New Testament, overdrinking, intoxication are depicted in the Scriptures as a disgrace, cause of many sorrows and curse /Gen.9:20-27, 19:31-38, I. Sam. 25:36, Esther 1:10, Mk. 6:21/. The gluttonous and drunkard son was killed in Israel, and could not be tolerated in the Christian community either /I. Cor. 5:11-13/. This is why Paul warns the church at Ephesus: "Do not get drunk with wine; for that is debauchery."

act of healing, of love and obedience to God that "they may all be one". We enter into fellowship with Him and so have fellowship with each other. And in this fellowship we find the meaning of our lives, as individuals and as a congregation. We worship, we witness, we obey and live for the Fellowship that is now and will be forever more. Amen.

PRAYER

Our heavenly Father, we come before Thee with grateful hearts as we join with thy faithful children here and abroad in the fellowship of thy Table.

We thank Thee for the privilege of coming to thy Table even as we humbly acknowledge before Thee that we come with sinful hearts and hands. Forgive, O Lord, our sins.

Our hearts are heavy with sorrow and sadness that thy Church is often times weak and timid in its witness to the world. Forgive, O Lord our weakness.

Even in this holy sacrament of the Last Supper, thy children cannot stand before Thee united and together. Forgive us, O Lord, our disunity.

But Thou, O Lord, are one. Thy church is one. And in Jesus Christ we are one with Thee just as He is one with Thee. Help us, O Lord, to minister to the world and to each other in this oneness. Make manifest thy power and greatness even though the witness we make is weak and small.

Work within us that which will bring forth the fruit of the spirit. Give us the faith that overcomes the world even our own doubt and mistrust. May we fellowship with Christ by whom alone we have fellowship and unity with each other.

Prepare us for the bread and the wine that by faith and in the spirit we be made one with Christ. Amen

/Arpad Beretz/
Why is it that the things you enjoy most are always sin? asks a character in a favorite American play and he refers to the pleasures derived from food, drink and sex. Really what is wrong with drunkenness? Physicians would inform us that overdrinking might easily threaten our health; in many persons, even moderate drinking might develop alcohol addiction /Jellinek disease/ which leads to total disintegration and death. All of us know cases where the bottle ruined family life, honesty, moral living, etc. But the greatest danger is to our inner life. Wine promises release from sorrow, escape from troubles, the strength of the "spirit" while in reality it gives rude awakenings, hangover, enslavement to the bottle. No wonder, that the prophet asks: "Why do you spend your money for that which ... does not satisfy?" /Isa. 55:2/ The deceit of drunkenness is that it does not solve our problems, it offers artificial satisfaction, it is a cheap substitute for God's Holy Spirit. But the lure of alcoholism reveals that all men are hungry for "spirit". As the great Hungarian poet, Endre Ady expressed it: "May it be the steam of the saloon or the fire of the Holy Spirit: but I need some intoxication!" Life is unbearable in a "sober", unenthusiastic, prosaic fashion. When the apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians "Do not get drunk with wine" he referred to the use of wine in the cult of Dionysus and possibly in other mysteries in which the worshipers induced religious ecstasies and frenzied exaltations by the excessive use of wine. Paul calls their attention to the fact that Christian devotion demands a clear spirit: "Be filled with the Spirit!" Intoxication: yes, but instead of the degrading effects of wine the Christian person is intoxicated by the Holy Spirit's life fulfilling power and illumination. And because the two kinds of intoxication are mutually incompatible, Paul warns: "Do not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit!"

Let us admit with true repentance that our Christianity is too sober in these days. We follow Jesus Christ only if it does not cost us too much: we join the church in a calculated way: only if it "pays" one way or another; we do not want to be "fools for Christ." But at this Table we have to realize that God gave his Son to us in an intoxicated way: in a joyful, self-forgetting, all-out fashion. Jesus did not think with great calculation when he had to drink the cup, but drank it at the cost of his life. No wonder that he compared the Gospel to the New Wine which cannot be retained in old forms! And surely when Pentecost came and the church was born, mocking people accused the apostles of being inebriated: "They are filled with new wine." /Acts. 2:13/ When we understand what God did for us in Jesus Christ we cannot help being intoxicated by the Good News. "Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all." /Phil. 3:8/

The wine in the Holy Communion is the symbol of this unrestrained joy and fellowship. It is a sign of a new covenant in Jesus blood: liberating, empowering, intoxicating covenant. The enormous and alarming increase in alcoholic indulgence is a symptom of a deep
hunger in the hearts of men and women for that which only the Holy Spirit can supply in the fellowship of the Christian Church. Will you be the poured out wine for them? Jesus calls us into a costly but most exciting covenant with Himself. Come! Drink of it, all of you. /Mt. 26:27/ Amen.

**PRAYER**

Almighty and most merciful God who alone art able to renew within us the right spirit and create in us a clean heart, we acknowledge and confess that we have sinned against Thee in more ways than we can number. Only Thou knowest how little we possess the life that pleaseth Thee, and how great is the power of death, through our sins, in us which makes us worthy of punishment and eternal damnation. We deserve thy righteous judgment, O Lord, for we have been so lukewarm in working for Thee.

Yet Thou art gracious to call us again to this Holy Table, promising us forgiveness and the renewing power of Thy Holy Spirit. Thou art close to us with thy everlasting love and mercy. Once more let the bread be broken and the cup be poured out before us so that we may be convinced of thy care and abundance. May our hungry heart be fed by thy life as assuredly as our mouth takes the bread; may our thirsty soul feel the joy of thy presence as truthfully as our lips are touched by the cup. O life giving Spirit of God, come: fill us, mold us, use us, and enable us to love our God with unrestrained joy and serve Him with unqualified loyalty.

Divine Guest, who didst promise to be with thy disciples wherever two or three were gathered together, bless us one by one and as a congregation of thy people so that we may carry the message of thy love to those who live around us. Help the church everywhere to spread the Good News of Thy Kingdom with holy zeal so that all men and nations may hear it in their own tongue and welcome it into their own lives. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

/John Butosi/

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